

July 27, 2007

Ravalli County Commissioners
Hamilton, Montana

Dear Commissioners,

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Ravalli County Commissioners

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I am writing now to express my concern of the proposal from the Ravalli County Road and Bridge Dept to re-open and use the Lost Horse Quarry for a proposed period of 10 years or more. Over the past 10 years, many times per season, I have used the adjacent areas to the west and east of the quarry for rock climbing with my kids and with friends. These climbing areas are among the best in Montana and are definitely a unique recreational resource. It seems to me that re-activation of the quarry to obtain rock will irrevocably damage the entire character of the Lost Horse Canyon drainage as a recreational site. The limitation of the activity to a period from mid-October to mid-April will not mitigate this issue because there are climbers, hunters and hikers who use these areas during this time also. Furthermore, although some of the main cliffs are to the north and west of the quarry, there are also climbs near and above the quarry and to the east which will be directly impacted by this action. Surely there must be alternative sources with less conflict and longer forecasted use where the Ravalli County Road and Bridge Dept and FS can obtain road fill and gravel for their projects without destroying one of the recreational high-points of the Darby Ranger District.

Damage to this climbing area, which is now receiving national recognition on rock climbing websites will certainly impact public use of this important resource.

Please do not hesitate to contact me if you have further questions about this matter.

Sincerely,



Bruce Chesebro, M.D.
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